

Dannel Malloy
Sun, Sep 8, 10:06 AM
Week of September 2

Trustees,

The weather is not the only sign that Fall is upon us. Students are back on our campuses for the traditional start of the academic year, and our faculty and staff are fully engaged in the fundamental work of our public mission - disseminating and building knowledge through teaching, supporting our students' learning, and research. And our public service flows from all three.

As I think about the summer break now ended, and the tradition of a Fall start to higher education's normal academic year, I can't help but observe that our need to innovate for Maine's public universities has no summer break or traditional Fall start. A culture of innovation requires that, while we remain good public stewards of the present, we always look forward, never accepting the status quo as the basis for our future viability or success.

It's a point noted in my Unified Accreditation Recommendation and report included in your September 15-16 meeting materials that were publicly released this past Friday afternoon. You've likely seen some of these materials by now, and in addition to the Unified Accreditation Recommendation you asked me to bring to prepare, along with a number of other items is a recommended change to the University of Maine School of Law's governance that we're asking you to approve so we can begin our search for the Law School's next Dean as soon as possible.

In a certain sense, matters of accreditation and governance may seem more bureaucratic than innovative. But I believe there is innovation here, and innovation ahead of us, fostered by the recommendations we're bringing to you in these matters. And if nothing else, our pace of action and leadership in Maine public higher education is picking up, and we should celebrate innovation in that too.

Considering the volume of material that's now been posted for you for next weekend's meeting in Fort Kent, I'd like to take a moment to recognize the hard work of dozens of my UMS colleagues who worked behind the scenes to prepare these materials and the recommendations in them. In doing so, I'm specifically calling out the work that went in to preparing our recommendations for the Law School and unified accreditation. There are others who won't be named here who contributed to preparing other portions of your agenda; they deserve our thanks too.

The Law School recommendations coming before you represent the efforts of at least the following people:

- Trustees Erwin and Eames
- Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration Ryan Low
- USM Chief Business Officer Alex Porteous
- Interim Law School Dean Dmitry Bam
- USM President Glenn Cummings
- Law School Assistant Dean for Finance and Administration Nicole Vinal Harvie
- Chief of Staff and General Counsel Jim Thelen

- Law School Advisory Committee Co-Chairs Deirdre Smith and Kurt Adams (on behalf of all committee members)
- UMS Executive Director of Public Affairs Dan Demeritt

The Unified Accreditation Recommendation came about from the work of many more of our colleagues, and included not only my written report and recommendation but also a new UMS web page that reflects my commitment to transparency in this effort. Those deserving our thanks include:

On the Unified Accreditation Recommendation report and Guiding Principles

- UMS Presidents Ferrini-Mundy, Cummings, Wyke, Boggs, Rice, and Serna
- Chief of Staff and General Counsel Jim Thelen
- Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Bob Neely
- Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Kay Kimball
- Chief Student Affairs Officer Rosa Redonnett
- Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Robert Placido
- Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration Ryan Low
- Director of Organizational Effectiveness Kim Jenkins
- UMS Executive Director of Public Affairs Dan Demeritt

(Not to mention literally dozens of other UMS colleagues, some of whom have departed UMS, who have worked on accreditation matters over the several-decade history recounted in our report.)

On the UMS Unified Accreditation webpage (which included sifting through, gathering and posting years of historical accreditation correspondence) and my System-wide message

- Chief of Staff and General Counsel Jim Thelen
- Director of Organizational Effectiveness Kim Jenkins
- UMS Executive Director of Public Affairs Dan Demeritt
- Internal Communications Manager Crompton "Hub" Burton
- Organizational Effectiveness Administrative Specialist Samantha Kramer
- Special Assistant to the Chancellor Rowena Clukey
- UMS Presidents and their staffs (who collected campus-based accreditation records)

By the way, if you haven't seen it, our Unified Accreditation webpage is here:

<https://sites.google.com/maine.edu/unified-accreditation/home>

You'll find on this site much of the historical record and correspondence on which my report and recommendation is based, and you'll see that we are taking our transparency pledge seriously.

Finally, as we look ahead to the Board meeting next weekend, I'd be remiss to not express a special note of thanks to Ellen Doughty, our Board Clerk, and Heather Massey, our Staff Associate for Board Operations. They do tremendous and good work to coordinate every detail for our meetings.

To these, along with all of our UMS colleagues who carry out public higher education's mission in Maine, we owe special thanks.

Regards,
Dan